TRI-COUNTY COLLEGE STUDY COMMITTEE

Midland, Michigan
November 25, 1955

To: Members of the Executive Committee and the Objectives Committees.

Here is an outline of what I believe to be the general principles agreed to by the three county units of our Objectives Committee. I have tried to indicate any areas of uncertainty that have appeared. In general, there appears to be a gratifying degree of unity in the basic ideas of the three committees.

I am sending this preliminary report to you for use as a work outline. If you think there is a viewpoint that is impractical, or if you think some statement should be changed for any reason, I hope you will let me know. We want the report that we are to present in January to be as complete and clear as possible, and your help is needed to make it so. Of course, the final report will include a suitable preamble and conclusion.

Sincerely,

W. P. Collings

Ad hoc

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NEED COMMITTEE:

You have many angles to pursue in making your study. The Objectives Committee has no desire to limit in any way the fields or the scope of your study. The following list includes a number of points that have been discussed by one or more of our three county sub-committees as guide posts for you to consider:

1. There is agreement among our members that the basis of the proposed college for this Northeast regional area of Michigan should be a full four-year, first quality liberal arts course.

2. This area college should provide at least two years of general work that can be accredited toward university courses in law, medicine, engineering, business administration or other specialized professions.

3. Two year terminal courses should be provided in liberal arts, homemaking, business practice and technical subjects for which a demand exists or develops. These courses would be similar in scope to those now provided by Bay City Junior College.

4. The inclusion of work experience through cooperative day courses in business, educational and industrial establishments should be explored thoroughly.

5. In connection with the foregoing, the advantages of a four semester, full-year combined education and work experience program should be given consideration. Year round operation of a college facility would increase its capacity. Cooperative courses at year round colleges can operate to the advantage of both students and employers. Students get practical experience, they earn while they learn, and the employer can have year round service from students.

6. Adult courses at the college level, such as those now presented in the three separate communities, should be presented by the college.

7. For the benefit of the Finance and Legal Committees, an early estimate of the probable number of students who would enter the first three categories above should be prepared and presented to them as soon as possible.

8. Our Objective Committees have stated clearly that the college must be prepared to admit qualified applicants for admission whether they reside inside or outside of the Tri-County area.

9. It is the stated desire of the Objectives Committees that this college shall become a new cultural center for the whole valley area. Keeping this concept clearly in mind, it is the recommendation of the Objective Committees that our effort must be devoted first to the establishment of an adequate educational plant.

10. Some far-sighted people have mentioned that in time dormitories will be needed. There is no doubt that if an area college is established, it will in time become a great institution, and dormitories will be required to house people from outside the area. This subject too should be kept in mind in the planning of the school area, and in providing adequate land for future needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Operating Expense

1. All committees agreed that the students should pay tuition approximately equal to one-third of the operating cost of the college. Tuition now charged by Bay City Junior College is about $140 per year.

2. Likewise there was unanimous agreement that State payments of $140 per year per student should be obtained. It seemed likely to us that a similar payment toward operating expense should be obtainable from the State for third and fourth year students.

3. The remaining portion of the operating expense would be approximately one-third and would have to come from area taxation.

4. Area taxes for this purpose should not be included in the 15 mil limitation.

5. It has been suggested that tuition for students from outside the area should include a charge for the operating costs paid by area taxation plus a charge for the capital expense write-off.

Capital Expense

Money for establishing the physical facilities would be raised by a bond issue to be repaid by area taxes. It is obvious that this money too will have to be secured outside the 15 mil limitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEGAL COMMITTEE:

1. All committees agreed that a governing board - or a board of trustees - should be elected by the qualified voters of the three communities. It was considered desirable by some that elections related to the college should take place at the same time as school board elections in June. There should be three to five members from each county. The terms should be staggered and four to six years in length. Elections for governing board members should take place every other year.

2. There were somewhat differing opinions on the relations between the governing body of the college and the existing school boards. There is a strong desire that the college management - or its administration - be strong and independent. There is an equally strong desire that the principal school boards responsible for the major high schools in the area work in close harmony with the college administration.

3. To accomplish this second purpose it has been suggested that an advisory body to the college administrator and to its trustees be established. This body would consist of appointees by each of these school boards.

4. In planning the structure from the legal standpoint, we propose that this type of organization be considered--an elected governing board and an appointed advisory board.

5. It has been suggested, also, that the Legal Committee make an effort to secure state financial support as outlined above under our recommendations to the Financial Committee. The question of possible state aid for capital investment has also been raised. It was the committee's desire that this possibility be considered, but our members do not want to sacrifice local control to obtain such financial aid from the State.

6. The Objectives Committees desire that the qualified voters of all three counties vote on the question of the establishment of the proposed college and taxation measures to establish and support it.

7. It has been suggested, also, that the establishment of the college require an affirmative vote by all three counties.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LOCATION COMMITTEE:

On this subject the committees lists the following considerations/what we believe to be the order of their importance:

1. First, and of foremost importance, our committees believed that setting the new college in an area apart--even distinctly apart from existing communities--would contribute to establishing it as an important new entity in the Tri-County area.

2. The general feeling was that we must be sure that the area acquired will be adequate for future growth--say 20 to 40 years. To this end the amount of land frequently mentioned has been 640 acres. Perhaps the studies of your committee and of others will modify this figure one way or the other.

3. Since the airport is equidistant from the three cities, the preferred location appears to be in that immediate area. The Location Committee must consider carefully the hazards in the vicinity and they must consult with proper authorities to be sure that the preferred site is in a location safely distant from the airport. One group said the runway pattern should be considered, but it is probable that any location that requires such consideration would be too close to be safe. Another factor the Location Committee may find of interest is the probable land requirements of the government in the airport vicinity in case of war. It seems likely that when all factors are taken into account, no location should be considered that is not several miles distant from the airport. What this distance is can be decided only by consulting competent advisors such as the Civil Aeronautics Authority may provide on this subject.

4. Regarding distances from the various cities--from the standpoint of population, the college should be nearer Saginaw. But Bay City has had a junior college for years, so from that standpoint, perhaps it should be nearer Bay City. Probably, in fact, the distance from each of the two cities should be about equal. From the standpoint of equal driving time the distance from Midland could be a few miles greater than that from either Saginaw or Bay City.

5. Other factors that have been mentioned are adequate drainage, sewage disposal, utilities, access roads and water supply. No site will be found with all of these facilities ready made. No doubt one can be found with adequate drainage. Unless it is close to a city, some kind of a sewage disposal system will have to be a part of the building project. Utilities are usually provided if the demand is established. Almost certainly a water line will be needed from an existing supply. And the county road network is such that, no doubt, adequate access roads can be secured at a minimum expense.

6. Probably the outstanding factor, in the end, will be the availability of land at a suitable price in a location satisfactory to the three communities. A few miles in the country, one way or the other, is a matter of only a few minutes driving or riding time today.

ABOUT OUR GEOGRAPHICAL AREA COMMITTEE:

1. The Objectives Committees have been busy studying the subjects to be covered by the other committees, and have given little consideration to this subject.

   For the information of the other committees, we quote the following two statements which outline the duties of the committee as viewed by our coordinator and by the committee chairman:

2. According to Mr. Crawford, the job of this committee is to determine--"The extent and degree to which the three counties of Bay, Midland and Saginaw might be considered a single community, now and in the future, with the probable ability to amicably establish, support, and operate an institution which might be commonly, if not legally, known as a regional college. We believe that your group has already been working with this concept of purpose".

3. Mrs. Sutton, Chairman of our Geographical Area Committee, states: "In making our survey of the Geographical Area we must keep in mind we need to show that this area can be considered a unit which can support one area college. This is necessary because the legislature needs to know the facts that will give weight to our future proposals for a college in this area.....Our study should show with facts, figures and discussion development that our three counties are not indiscriminately joining forces to have one college for just financial reasons or need, but also because there is an ethical reason from the aspect of the geographical area".

4. It seems to us that the vigor with which our Tri-County College Committees approach the problem as a whole, and the continued attention that our area continues to apply to this joint problem, will supply adequate proof to the State of Michigan that we have ability to establish and operate a college.

It has been suggested that the committee address itself also to the problem of whether the area should be determined by the county lines or by school districts.

CONCERNING OUR PUBLIC INFORMATION AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE:

Our Objectives Committee has established close cooperation with the Public Information Committee. We will be glad to continue, in the future, to help to prepare and supply information on the work of the various committees for dissemination to the public. This is an important job, and one in which the membership of each individual committee should participate. Our help is available if needed.

The recent efforts of the Public Information Committee have proved helpful in stimulating much greater public interest in the work of all of our committees. This has created an appetite for progress reports of our committees--an appetite which we must be prepared to satisfy.